

Minutes of the 28 January 2013
Special Meeting of the Yancey County Board of Commissioners
Held at 9:00 o'clock a.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room
Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville, North Carolina

Present at the 28 January 2013 meeting of the Yancey County Board of Commissioners were Chairman Johnny Riddle, Commissioner Jill Austin, Commissioner Jim Edwards, Commissioner Randy Ollis, Commissioner Jeff Whitson, County Manager Nathan Bennett, Clerk to the Board Jason Robinson, County Attorney Donny Laws, County Planner Jamie McMahan, Finance Director Lynne Hensley, Finance Officer Brandi Burleson, and members of the general public.

Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

Chairman Riddle called the meeting to order and asked the Board to approve the agenda. Commissioner Ollis made a motion to approve the agenda and it was seconded by Commissioner Austin. The motion to approve was unanimous. (Attachment A)

Organizational Overview

County Manager began the meeting by going over the organizational structure of Yancey County Government. Mr. Bennett presented the Board with an organizational chart of the different departments and agencies that Yancey County has dealings with in some kind of capacity (Attachment B). Mr. Bennett went through the functions of not only all of the county departments that are directly supervised by him but also the other agencies such as the library, the health district, and economic development commission that the county funds. Discussion followed about the outside agencies and their roles and responsibilities as it relates to county government.

Finance and Budget Update

The Board next heard from Finance Director Lynne Hensley and Finance Officer Brandi Burleson about Finance for local government. Mrs. Hensley reviewed with the Board the statutes that explain local government finance. Mrs. Hensley also reviewed the duties of a finance officer, finance director, the need for a pre-audit before purchases, and the threshold and procedures for items to be brought before the Board for a budget amendment. Mrs. Burleson next reviewed the budget process and stated that the process would soon begin with each department head being asked to submit their proposed requests. The finance office will then present them to the Board for consideration and get the Board's input about how and where to modify the budget. The budget must be passed before July 1 and all amendments for the current fiscal year must be submitted and approved before June 30th. Mrs. Burleson also went through the 2012-13 budget with the Board and pointed out certain line items and certain funds that are separate from the general fund. Mrs. Hensley then briefly did an overview of the personnel policy and the accounting procedures policies. She also gave the Board an update on the fiscal health of the county. Mrs. Hensley began by explaining what a fund balance was and how it is calculated. Mrs. Hensley explained the county financial situation in 2008 when measures were put in place to rebuild the county's fund balance which at that time was -8%. Through strict budgeting, restructuring of county services in day to day operations of county government, and other budget modifications the county now has a fund balance of 1.7% as of June 30, 2012. Mrs. Hensley then informed the Board that the Local Government Commission (LGC) strongly recommends that all counties have a fund balance of 8% but most counties our size have fund balances around 20%. Mrs. Hensley stated that the county's goal is to get to a fund balance of 16% and at that time the fiscal state of the county will be healthy.

Special Projects Update

The Board next heard from Harry Buckner with McGill Associates. Mr. Buckner gave a history of the East Yancey Sewer Project for the last 20 years or so. Mr. Buckner stated that the project originally started with the Town of Burnsville but was switched to the East Yancey Water and Sewer District because money was available for unsewered communities through the Rural Center. A grant of \$3 million was secured from the Rural Center as well as \$3 million from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Easement acquisition was began several years ago but then stalled until 2009. Mr. Buckner also noted some problems that the project has faced. The most recent problems being a permit for crossing creeks being suspended by the Army Corp of Engineers because of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the notice by Moore and Son, the company that is installing the pipelines. Mr. Buckner stated that both of these issues are being dealt with and that the project will soon be

back underway. County Attorney Donny Laws then asked Mr. Buckner to supply the Board with a timeline for continued construction, the costs that are associated with this delay and possibility of having to rebid the pipeline contract, and a plan for controlling costs. Mr. Buckner stated that there is \$500,000 in contingency for this project and it cannot go over budget. He further stated that there may be some movement with the Army Corp of Engineers and the discussions with Moore and Son have been productive but there could be a possibility of having to rebid the installation of the pipelines.

The Board next heard from County Planner Jamie McMahan who gave the Board an update on the progress of the Yancey County Senior Center. He stated that the county is working with High Country Council of Governments on the North Carolina Catalyst Grant and USDA to secure the remaining funding for the building.

County Operations and Services

The Board next heard from Dennis Wilson and Lisa Harrell with D and D Collections, the company that the county contracts with to provide child support enforcement. Mr. Wilson gave a general overview of the child support program in North Carolina and informed the Board that the state gave guidelines to go by for the program. Ms. Harrell stated that the state also provides goals for the child support program based on caseload and the number of workers in the program. Ms. Harrell also reported that collections for the county have gone up for the last 3 years and that the program has met a majority of the goals that have been set by the state.

The Board next heard from Tax Administrator Jeff Boone and Tax Collector Fonda Thomas who reviewed property tax administration and collections. Both reported on the increased collection rate over the last two years. The Board asked for Mrs. Thomas to review the procedures for foreclosure. She stated that she would not send out a pre-foreclosure notice until the taxes were two years delinquent or the taxpayer owed \$150. Mrs. Thomas was also asked about any avenues that were being explored other than foreclosure. She stated that she was going to begin garnishments when Deputy Tax Collector Zach Pittman resigned. A discussion then followed about business personal property audits that have been completed by Tax Management Associates. Mr. Boone encouraged the Board to talk to other counties about what they are doing in areas of tax collection and assessment and for the Board to give some direction in where they would like to see the tax department go. Discussion then followed about Zacchaeus Legal Services. The Board directed County Attorney to make contact with Zacchaeus Legal Services about the possibility of renegotiation of the contract. Discussion also followed about customer service issues that some of the Board members have been hearing about in the tax office. Following discussion, Commissioner Whitson made a motion to investigate the alleged issues in the tax office and get a report so that the Board can take appropriate action. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Edwards and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Adjournment

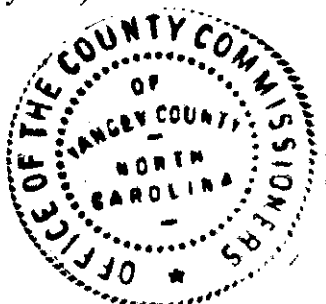
Having no further business Commissioner Austin made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Commissioner Whitson. The vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved and authenticated on this the _____ 11th _____ day of February 2013.

Attest:


Jason Robinson
Clerk to the Board

(county seal)

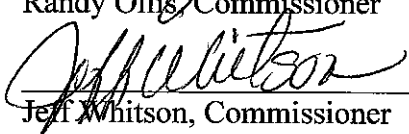



Johnny Riddle, Chairman

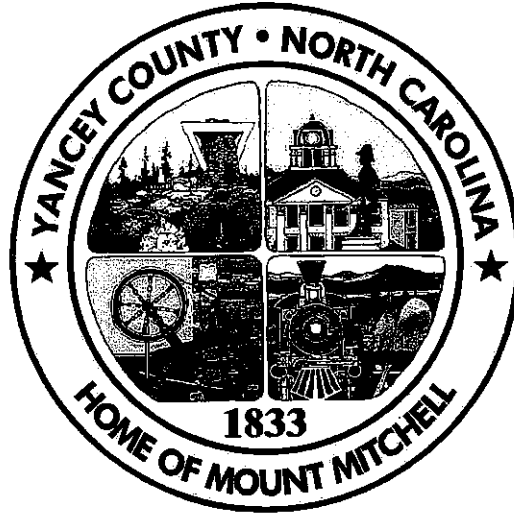

Jill Austin, Commissioner


Jim Edwards, Commissioner


Randy Ollis, Commissioner


Jeff Whitson, Commissioner

Attachment A



**AGENDA
YANCEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
January 28, 2013**

- I. Call to Order - Chairman Riddle
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Organizational Overview
- IV. Finance and Budget Update
 - a. Finance Overview and Discussion
 - b. Tax Administration Overview and Discussion
- V. Capital Project Update
 - a. East Yancey Sewer Project
 - b. Senior Center Project
 - c. Cane River Park
 - d. Old Library
- VI. Pending Issues
- VII. County Operations/Services
- VIII. Future Initiatives
- IX. General Discussion
- X. Adjourn

**YANCEY COUNTY
Organizational Chart**

